



HOW TO OBTAIN A PERMIT FOR  
**Private Grading**  
City of San Diego  
Development Services Department

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN  
**559**  
July 2019

This Information Bulletin describes private grading and the process for obtaining a grading permit on private property where building construction is proposed. Private grading is a new process that involves grading plan review, grading permit issuance, and grading inspection by Development Services.

To qualify for this new process the proposed work cannot be within public property or public easements including the right-of-way. In addition, the proposed grading cannot impact public property or public improvements. Private grading permits do not involve public improvements and the grading plans do not need to be on mylars nor will as-builts be required.

Projects that involve a subdivision improvement agreement (SIA), grading within special flood hazard areas, or public improvements (or contemplating future public improvements) are not eligible for this process. Sites graded under the private grading process will not be eligible for future public improvements or the conversion of private improvements to public improvements.

Plans for private grading shall be separate from the building plan set and will be permitted separately; however, the building plans and private grading plans may be submitted at the same time.

**I. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following plans and documents shall be provided when applying for a Private Grading permit.

**A. FORMS**

Provide one copy of the completed General Application ([DS-3032](#)).  
Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist ([DS-560](#)).

**B. PLANS**

Provide five (5) copies of the grading plans (may require 2 additional plans if located in the Downtown Community Plan or scope of work is Site Reconnaissance) including the following information: (For detailed descriptions of the requirements, please see [Section 3 Project Submittal Manual](#))

1. Associated building project number when applicable
2. Detailed scope of work (e.g.: Grading for future single family residence, retaining walls under separate permit)
3. Limit of grading
4. Property line dimensions (any impact to the public right of way and/or easements within the project site will disqualify project from this process) See submittal manual Section 3

**C. DOCUMENTS**

1. Drainage Study
2. Geotechnical Investigation Report
3. Construction Cost Estimate
4. Clearly identify existing and proposed private utilities included in this application
5. For projects with a discretionary permit, provide exhibit 'A' and the permit (and map) conditions.

**II. SUBMIT FOR PLAN REVIEW**

Plans must be submitted for review. This can be done as a walk in or with an appointment. To make an appointment for your submittal, call (619) 446-5300. Check in on the 3rd floor of the Development Services Center located at 1222 First Avenue.

**III. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Connection to the City's water or sewer mains requires a separate right-of-way permit. See [Information Bulletin 166, "Permit for Water, Sewer or Fire Service"](#).
- B. The installation of a cross-connection control device on all water services must be in accordance with [Information Bulletin 113, "Cross-Connection Controls"](#).
- C. A Traffic Control Permit may be required, please see [Information Bulletin 177 "Right of Way Permit for Traffic Control"](#).
- D. For applications for Private Utilities see [Information Bulletin 182 "Permit For Private Utilities"](#)

**IV. FEES**

Plan check fees are required to be paid prior to review , please see [Information Bulletin 502 " Fee/Deposit Schedule for Grading/Right-Of-Way"](#) table 502A . For your convenience, DSD offers online payment through [SanDiego.Gov/DSD](#). Payment may also be made in person by cash, check, ATM card, Visa or MasterCard. Checks shall be in the exact amount, drawn on US banks, and made payable to the "City Treasurer." Due to space constraints, we are unable to store submitted plans awaiting fee payment.

**Express Plan Check** is available, see [Information Bulletin 502](#) for Express fees.

The inspection fee is established from the approved Construction Cost Estimate of the grading, landscape and irrigation and drainage improvements being done. The estimate must be prepared by a registered civil engineer using the most current Development Services Department—Unit Price List see below.

Construction Cost Estimate	Inspection Fee	Increment
\$0 to \$15,000	\$1,500	-
\$15,001 to \$35,000	\$2,700	-
\$35,001 to \$50,000	\$3,700	-
\$50,001 to \$100,000	\$4,800	2% of amount over \$50,000
\$100,001 and over	\$6,000	1% of amount over \$100,000

Additional plan check and inspection fees may be assessed at an hourly rate for fees not covered.

**Please note that plan check fees and some administrative fees are non-refundable. See Refund Policy noted within [Refund Application Form DS-721](#) for additional refund information.**

**Long Term Monitoring Fee**

This fee is charged at permit issuance for grading permit projects with a cost estimate of \$100,000 or greater to monitor project compliance with storm water, environmental mitigation, slope revegetation, paleontology, and other permit conditions on an on going basis after projects have been completed and final inspection has occurred.

**Cost Estimate \$100,000 to \$500,000.....\$2,251.80**

**Cost Estimate over \$500,000.....\$4,504.82**

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**V. PERMIT ISSUANCE**

- A. 2 sets of plans with ink stamps of approval from all reviewing disciplines will be required for permit issuance
- B. Approved reports or studies used for plan review
- C. Payment of all remaining fees

**VI. PERMIT EXPIRATION**

A grading permit shall expire 24 months from the date of issuance (M.C. 129.0650), if it is associated with a Building Permit, the expiration date will be the later of the two.

An [Application for Extension of Time DS-340](#) may be submitted no earlier than 60 calendar days before expiration (M.C. 129.0651). A maximum of 2 extensions may be granted for period of 180 days each.

**VII. INSPECTIONS**

Inspections are required for all grading on private property and will be performed by Development Services Department (DSD) staff. Inspections can be scheduled online through [SanDiego.gov/dsd](http://SanDiego.gov/dsd), by calling the IVR 858 581-7111 or contacting the inspection office 858 492-5070. Prior to any site disturbance activities, contractor shall make arrangements for a Pre Construction Meeting with DSD Staff by calling the inspection office number listed above. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to schedule the following inspections:

- A. Pre Construction Meeting
- B. Rough Grading
- C. Final Grading

Prior to Final inspection approval the following need to be addressed (as applicable)

- As Graded Geotechnical Report
- Permanent Best Management Practices (BMP)
- Mitigation Monitoring Coordination (MMC)
- Paleontological/Archaeological Report

**VIII. CONSTRUCTION CHANGES**

Changes to approved and permitted plans will be reviewed at the hourly rates for each discipline reviewing the change. Fees will be due prior to construction change issuance. Please see [Information Bulletin 118 "Construction Changes to Approved Plans"](#)

Documents referenced in this Information Bulletin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Application, <a href="#">DS-3032</a></li> <li>• Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist <a href="#">DS-560</a></li> <li>• Application for Extension of Time for Grading/Right-of-Way Permits <a href="#">DS-340</a></li> <li>• Project Submittal Manual, <a href="#">Section 3</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 113</a>, Cross-Connection Control</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 118</a> Construction Changes to Approved Plans</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 120</a>, Project Inspections</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 166</a>, Water, Sewer &amp; Fire Service</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 177</a>, Public Right-of-Way Permit for Traffic Control</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 181</a>, Private Underground Fire Service &amp; Hydrants</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 182</a>, Private Utilities</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 502</a>, Grading/Right-of-Way &amp; Mapping Actions</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 560</a>, Grading Permit for Site Reconnaissance and Testing</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 710</a>, Building Demolition/Removal</li> <li>• San Diego Municipal Code (<a href="#">SDMC SECTION 129.0602</a>, 142.0101, 145.3601)</li> </ul>



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